

CITY OF MILPITAS
SISTER CITIES ADVISORY COMMISSION (SCC)
MILPITAS CITY HALL COMMITTEE CONFERENCE ROOM

MINUTES
March 27, 2014

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call** Chair Grilli called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. Commissioners present: Arbaugh, Arefi, Chen, Grilli, Hardin, Serpa. Commissioners absent: Mateo. Alternate Commissioners absent: Chang, P., Chang, T.
- Council Liaison Carmen Montano: Present
MHS Student Liaison Brenda Su: Absent
MUSD Liaison Gunawan Alisantosa: Absent
Staff Liaison Leslie Stobbe: Present
- II. Alternates Seating of** None.
- III. Allegiance Pledge of** Chair Grilli led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- IV. Minutes Approval of** MOTION to approve the minutes of February 27, 201.
M / S: Arbaugh / Arefi Ayes: All
- V. Agenda** MOTION to approve the agenda of March 27, 2014.
M / S: Serpa / Arbaugh Ayes: All
- VI. Announcements:** Staff announced: 1) Commissioners' Lunch is Sat., April 26 from 11:30-1:30; 2) Excused vs. Unexcused absences – staff noted that commissioners are to contact the Chair for an excused absence to a meeting and staff appreciates being included in the notification.
- VII. Public Forum:** None.
- VIII. New Business - None**
- IX. Old Business**
- 1. Sister City Request: Seongnam City, Gyeonggi Province, South Korea**
Commissioner Chen opened described outreach with Korean churches in Milpitas to get an idea of possible community support of this sister city request. One resident and a pastor of New Vision Church were contacted. Both provided positive responses

in regards to establishing this relationship. He noted that running in parallel with the research is a concern raised by Tsukuba City's Globalization and Cultural Division regarding a press conference conducted by the Mayor of Seongnam. Content stated that Seongnam desired construction of a peace park in Milpitas that would include a statue of a Comfort Woman. The SCC was surprised to hear about this and obtained a translation of the news website reporting on the press conference. If the translation is correct, Commissioner Nolan noted this appears to be an announcement of intention to construct a commemorative statue as part of a sister city relationship with Milpitas. He noted the need to confirm with Seongnam representatives if this translation is consistent with the facts. The City of Milpitas issued a response in the form of a news release responding to international rumors. It directly states that claims about City of Milpitas plans to place a Comfort Woman statue and erect a Korean War monument are false and that the City has no intention of constructing such memorials. Commissioner Nolan asked is it was possible to determine where these rumors originate. Staff responded that this is not possible. What the City administration is responding to are the hundreds of emails received about the rumors, predominately in favor of a memorial. Staff was basically ignoring these emails until the Seongnam Vision's website report of the press conference was brought to staff's attention. Concerns were then raised that there is a presumption that the City will agree to construct the memorial and other statues in Tom Evatt Park, as shown in photos of the press conference. Responding inquiry from Commissioner Arbaugh, staff noted that the City's news release went to local, national and international news sources. It was posted on the Sister Cities Commission's webpage.

Chair Grilli asked Seongnam representative, Eun-hee Koo, if she had opportunity to read the City's translation of the Seongnam Vision report of the press conference. She responded that she did read it in Korean and that this is the first time she's reading the English translation provided by the City. She noted that concern about this news report was raised with Seongnam City officials. Ms. Koo stated that the referenced photo was a presentation of a letter to Mayor Esteves. Chair Grill stated that he's sensitive to the fact that translations sometimes don't represent what was meant in the first place. Discussion followed regarding specific aspects of the English translation provided by the City.

Ms. Koo offered to translate the website and Chair Grilli responded that wasn't necessary at this time.

Chair Grilli asked questions in regards to the English translation: 1) Does this translation properly represent what was said in Korean? Is it a fair translation from Korean to English? 2) In the original press conference, was it indicated that the SCC agreed to anything? 3) In the original press conference, was it said that the statue of a girl was approved by the City Council? 4) Did it state that a statue would be placed into a Milpitas park? 5) Does this properly represent what the Mayor's message was? Or, was the Mayor saying something different from this? 6) Would this properly represent what the Mayor would like to do after a relationship is established with Milpitas? This question was rephrased: In reading about the press conference,

does this indicate that the Mayor's desire is to build a peace park with the statue of a Comfort Woman in Milpitas? 7) How important is the establishment of a peace park with the statue of a Comfort Woman to Seongnam City and the Mayor as it relates to the establishment of a sister city relationship with the City of Milpitas?

Ms. Koo provided these responses: 1) There are slight mistranslations in that there is preparation to receive approval of the proposal to be received as a sister city, not that this has already occurred. What is meant is that it is Seongnam City's will (desire) to become a Milpitas sister city. 2) No, that is a mistranslation. 3) No, this is not a correct translation. 4) This is not a right translation at all. 5) No, this is a mistranslation. The Mayor never says this is about the statue of a girl and also in Korean there is nothing that says the SCC has approved the relationship. 6) Yes, this is his individual desire. 7) It is not related.

Ms. Koo offered as background that a mayoral election will occur in June. This is presented as a political issue by the mayor. This is not the purpose of Seongnam City's application to be a sister city. We have clearly informed Seongnam City representatives that we are not going to have (promote) the statue of a girl. Should there be a peace park constructed in Milpitas, this will be cultural and educational, not political.

Commissioner Chen asked if possible to obtain clarification from Seongnam's mayor or his office. Chair Grilli stated this is the request of the SCC and asked to include a statement about how important is it to Seongnam to have a Comfort Woman statue erected in Milpitas.

Chair Grilli requested a letter of clarification from the Mayor of Seongnam or his representative responding to the issues discussed. Commissioner Arbaugh asked if the Mayor of Seongnam could have interpreted the August 13, 2013 Council Resolution relative to the topic of Comfort Women and commemorate them in Milpitas. Chair Grilli asked if the SCC wants to spend time researching a possible relationship with Seongnam if in fact the City Council directs to not engage in this political controversy. Commissioner reiterated that the next step is to receive clarification with regards to the intent or expectations of Seongnam City with regards to a peace park and Comfort Women statue.

Ms. Koo stated she will request a clarification letter of the mayor's office. She added that this issue may be part of the "wish list", but there is a greater emphasis on economic and cultural development. She stressed that this issue is brought up by the mayor as a politician as part of his re-election campaign.

By consensus, the SCC decided to hold research on this item until a clarification is provided.

Vice Chair Serpa stated that she would like to review an English translation of the website provided by Seongnam City. Staff will send the translation as a Word document and a link to the website page for Seongnam Vision.

Commissioner Nolan commented that it's possible to be in sister city relationship with two cities whose countries have international disputes. Chair Grilli stated that he and the SCC cannot speak to that as it is not know what the City Council wants at this point or how involved they would want to get in an international controversy of this nature. Commissioner Nolan noted that the focus should be on building bridges and cultural understanding.

2. FY 2014-15 Work Plan & Fundraising Discussion

Staff distributed an outline of possible elements for the work plan. Staff advised a process whereby the SCC could review the elements and then form a timeline for each element. Discussion followed regarding possible activities and projects. Staff noted that the SCC is a dynamic group that works with the community to obtain public opinion and support. Discussion followed regarding the section titled *Expectations of Commissioners / Ideas for Community Engagement*. Chair Grilli outlined the importance of forming community groups that support the relationships and that this should be a requirement of all sister city applications. It is a way of finding out who in the community will help commissioners make aspects of the relationship happen. As an example, staff reviewed the concept of exploring fundraising in relation to the work plan establishing a timeframe to discuss this topic and then possible experiment with a fundraiser. This would be something that can be a goal for the fiscal year. The work plan demonstrates what the SCC intends to do for the year.

Staff noted that Chair Grilli brought a Kiwanis speaker to her attention: The Campbell Club will have member Don Jessup discuss ways to get fundraising started. The luncheon will be on Tuesday, April 1 and begin at Noon. Commissioners are welcome to attend with staff.

Vice Chair Serpa noted that a workshop about fundraising could be conducted as an additional meeting to discuss specific areas of a topic. This then helps to foster open discussion and have something to speak specifically to at a regular meeting. Chair Grilli stated that most of the time there is not a lot of business on most agendas. A workshop could then be held during a regular meeting. Then the item can appear on a future agenda as a fully vetted item to move forward with the topic.

In regards to work plan discussions on the agenda, staff noted that she will come back to the SCC with a different, or updated, document every month for review and changes. At this point, staff needs to know if the *2014 Work Plan Elements* document is adequate to begin placing the elements into a proposed timeline. Discussion followed regarding topics that are important to the SCC now and what are things to change. Staff reviewed a proposed linear project planning format for the work plan and how to handle variables such as when official delegations would visit.

Vice Chair Serpa recommend specific times to review the work plan. Staff suggested that there be three reviews per year with the third review being a discussion on the upcoming year. Commissioner Arefi suggested that each sister city be viewed as a project for specific commissioners and that there are other projects that involve all commissioners. Discussion followed how to present projects or topics along the timeline.

Chair Grilli requested that staff send an email to commissioners requesting that they respond with their interest in working as a co-commissioner leading a sister city relationship. Staff stated that she will work towards demonstrating the Microsoft Project program to the SCC.

3. Sister City Commission Promotional Expenses

Staff presented the latest expense listing noting that the SCC is over its spending limit by \$99.75. She has notified the budget liaison and estimates that the SCC will over spend by about \$800 this fiscal year.

4. SCI International Conference 2014, July 31 – August 2

Staff noted follow-through based upon motions made at the February 27 meeting. In the interim, Vice Chair Grilli notified staff that he will not be able to attend the conference. Staff has registered Vice Chair Serpa and herself at the \$375 “early bird” discount. Based on the motions, the SCC has another slot open to send a commissioner. Staff researched sending Student Liaison Su to the Youth Leadership Summit, a concurrent track to the conference and will contact her regarding her level of interest in available participation. Lastly, staff sent an email to the Economic Development Commission asking if there was interest with one response.

5. E-Pal Project with Sister Cities

Chair Grilli reported that all the letters for the 6th Graders were received in Figline Valdarno. He asked how it is going at this level and with the high school-aged students. The teacher replied that she is not making it a required process, but advising students to reply. Staff will send an email to the Milpitas High School teacher for an update. Zanker, Curtner and Rose Elementary Schools are the schools that sent hard copy letters.

6. Home-stays for Dagupan and Huizhou Students, October 2014

Staff reported on developments: new advertisement for The Union; a flyer that can be laminated; asking the administration to send an email of parents; Milpitas Post editorial; all this will be placed on the SCC’s web page. Another idea was to contact churches with congregants of Filipino and Chinese descent; a volunteer is needed to do this. One idea was to produce a public service announcement for MC-TV26. Commissioner Arefi offered to do this. There is the idea to place a message on the City’s marquee, which will be done when it is repaired. Staff noted the SCC’s previous discussion to place first priority with finding home-stays with families that have a student in the high school. Some of these ideas are general in reach and most

likely will not reach MHS families. Staff will try to reach the Chinese Language Arts teacher at MHS with posters for distribution to students. Staff and Chair Grilli will reach out to MHS administration to get word to the PTSA.

7. Tsukuba City, Japan

Commissioner Arbaugh stated that he's willing to contact Tsukuba about the Memorandum of Understanding, but he wants to wait until the concerns with the Seongnam City application are resolved. He believes that when he contacts Tsukuba about their interest that they would be interest in the outcome with Seongnam City. Commissioner Chen noted that this is a subject that Tsukuba should bring up with Milpitas. By consensus, the SCC decided to wait until previously discussed clarification is received from Seongnam City.

8. Dagupan City, Philippines

Staff noted that Dagupan officials have not yet been informed that a student visit year is predicated upon securing home-stays for 10 students by June 20. Chair Grilli stated he talked to Commissioner Mateo and can report that she has not had contact from Dagupan. They agreed to not make a commitment with Dagupan since home-stays are not yet secured. Commissioner Mateo will be reaching out to the community.

9. Huizhou Municipality, China

Staff and Chair Grilli received an email inquiry from Huizhou staff about the student visit. Staff responded that the visit this year is predicated upon securing home-stays for 10 students by June 20.

10. Comune de Figline Valdarno, Italy

Vice Chair Serpa stated that the previous mayor, Roberto Nocentini, has lost the primary election for mayor of a newly formed combined city. In Italy, interest in a sister city relationship only moves forward with mayoral endorsement. Since the election will not occur until sometime after the MOU, this is an unknown. Discussion followed that this MOU will most likely be allowed to expire as a new agreement would need to be set with new city. She noted that a previous city administrator, Daniele Raspini, is advising candidates that the community would like to continue the relationship with Milpitas.

X. City Council Liaison Report: None.

XI. School District Liaison Report – None

XII. Future Agenda Items – Reviewed with these changes:

1. Sister City Relationships / Cultural Exchanges
 - i. Tsukuba, Japan
 - ii. Dagupan, Philippines

- iii. Huizhou, China
- iv. Figline Valdarno, Italy
- 2. Seongnam City Research & Discussion
- 3. Grants for Sister Cities Activities
- 4. August 28, 2014 Meeting
- 5. Fundraising Workshop

XIII. Adjournment

No further business was discussed. Chair Grilli requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting of March 27, 2014.

MOTION to adjourn the meeting of March 27, 2014 to the next regularly scheduled meeting of April 24, 2014.

M / S: Arbaugh / Serpa

Ayes: All

Respectfully Submitted,

Leslie Stobbe
Staff Liaison